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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A therapeutic apparatus for a patient comprising:
a support frame including a first body supporting portion and a second body supporting portion, the first body supporting portion moveable relative to the second body supporting portion along a longitudinal axis;
a first actuator adapted to move the first body supporting portion relative to the second body supporting portion along the longitudinal axis;
a securing system adapted to secure a patient to the first and second body supporting portions; and
a linking mechanism adapted to move the first body supporting portion along a path relative to the second body supporting portion, the path comprising at least one rotational degree of freedom.
2. (original) The therapeutic apparatus of claim 1 wherein the at least one rotational degree of freedom comprises two rotational degrees of freedom.
3. (original) The therapeutic apparatus of claim 1 wherein the at least one rotational degree of freedom comprises three rotational degrees of freedom.
4. (original) The therapeutic apparatus of claim 1 wherein the linkage mechanism is adapted to move the first body supporting portion along the path comprising at least one rotational degree of freedom simultaneously with movement of the first body supporting portion relative to the second body supporting portion along the longitudinal axis.
5. (original) The therapeutic apparatus of claim 1 wherein the securing system comprises a first belt attachable to the first body supporting portion and adapted to secure the patient to the first body supporting portion and a second belt attachable to the

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second body supporting portion and adapted to secure the patient to the second body supporting portion.

6. (canceled)

7. (currently amended) The therapeutic apparatus of claim ~~[[6]]~~1 wherein the first actuator comprises a pneumatic actuator.

8. (currently amended) The therapeutic apparatus of claim ~~[[6]]~~1 wherein the first actuator comprises a double-acting pneumatic cylinder.

9. (currently amended) The therapeutic apparatus of claim ~~[[6]]~~1 comprising a source of compressed air adapted to actuate the first actuator.

10. (currently amended) The therapeutic apparatus of claim ~~[[6]]~~1 comprising a second actuator adapted to move the first body supporting portion along at least one rotational degree of freedom.

11. (original) The therapeutic apparatus of claim 10 wherein the rotational degree of freedom comprises pitch movement.

12. (currently amended) The therapeutic apparatus of claim 1 comprising:
~~a second actuator first and second actuators each~~ adapted to displace a portion of the therapeutic apparatus; and
a single power source connected to the first and second actuators.

13. (currently amended) The therapeutic apparatus of claim 1 comprising:
~~a first actuator adapted to move the first body supporting portion relative to the second body supporting portion along a longitudinal axis;~~

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a second actuator adapted to move a head supporting portion of a cervical traction device relative to the first body supporting portion; and
a single power source connected to the first and second actuators.

14. (original) The therapeutic apparatus of claim 1 comprising:
a head supporting portion moveable relative to the second body supporting portion; and
a pair of neck wedges adapted to retain a patient's head to the head supporting portion.

15. (original) The therapeutic apparatus of claim 1 comprising at least one locking mechanism adapted to releasably retain the first body supporting portion in a plurality of locations along the path relative to the second body supporting portion.

16. (original) The therapeutic apparatus of claim 15 wherein the at least one locking mechanism is continuously adjustable.

17. (original) The therapeutic apparatus of claim 15 comprising at least one locking mechanism for each rotational degree of freedom.

18. (original) The therapeutic apparatus of claim 1 comprising a sliding mechanism supporting the first body supporting portion.

19. (original) The therapeutic apparatus of claim 1 wherein the linking mechanism comprises a roll mechanism.

20. (original) The therapeutic apparatus of claim 1 wherein the linking mechanism comprises a pitch mechanism.

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21. (original) The therapeutic apparatus of claim 1 wherein the linking mechanism comprises a yaw mechanism.

22. (original) The therapeutic apparatus of claim 1 wherein the linking mechanism comprises a cantilever structure pivotally attached to the support frame.

23. (original) The therapeutic apparatus of claim 1 wherein the support frame includes a first adjustable member adapted to adjust the height of the first and second body supporting portions.

24. (original) The therapeutic apparatus of claim 1 comprising a cervical traction member.

25. (original) The therapeutic apparatus of claim 1 comprising a processor adapted to communicate with the apparatus.

26. (original) The therapeutic apparatus of claim 1 comprising a processor adapted to retain a plurality of traction protocols.

27. (original) The therapeutic apparatus of claim 1 comprising a processor adapted to retain a plurality of cervical and lumbar traction protocols.

28. (currently amended) A method of treating back pain in a patient comprising the steps of:

providing a therapeutic apparatus having a support frame with a first body supporting portion, [[and]] a second body supporting portion, and a first actuator adapted to move the first body supporting portion relative to the second body supporting portion along a longitudinal axis;

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supporting the patient along the first body supporting portion and the second body supporting portion;

securing the patient to the apparatus with a securing system;

moving the first body supporting portion along a path relative to the second body supporting portion, the path comprising at least one rotational degree of freedom; and

activating the actuator to move ~~moving~~ the first body supporting portion relative to the second body supporting portion along the a longitudinal axis to affect the distance between the first body supporting portion and the second body supporting portion.

29. (original) The method of claim 28 wherein the step of moving the first body supporting portion along a path comprising at least one rotational degree of freedom occurs simultaneously with moving the first body supporting portion along the longitudinal axis.

30. (original) The method of claim 28 wherein the step of moving the first body supporting portion along a path comprising at least one rotational degree of freedom occurs after the first body supporting portion is moved along the longitudinal axis.

31. (original) The method of claim 28 wherein the step of moving the first body supporting portion along a path comprising at least one rotational degree of freedom occurs before the first body supporting portion is moved along the longitudinal axis.

32. (currently amended) The method of claim 28 comprising securing the patient to the first body supporting ~~structure~~ portion with a first belt and securing the patient to the second body supporting portion with a second belt.

33. (currently amended) The method of claim 28 comprising releasably retaining the first body supporting portion along one or more locations along the path relative to the second body supporting portion.

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34. (original) The method of claim 28 comprising supporting the patient along the first body supporting portion and second body supporting portion in a prone or supine position.

35. (original) The method of claim 28 wherein the therapeutic apparatus includes a processor, the method comprising programming one or more treatment protocols into the processor.

36. (original) The method of claim 28 wherein the therapeutic apparatus includes a processor, the method comprising storing one or more treatment protocols into the processor.